

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEVADA**

Case No.: 3:24-cv-00526-ART-CLB

EXHIBIT 3

Media reports from Reno News & Review, Our Town Reno, and KUNR regarding Washoe County Libraries and Our Center “partnership”

Submitted by:

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Date: January 7, 2025

This document is submitted as part of Plaintiff's filing in opposition to Defendant Build Our Center, Inc.'s Motion to Dismiss. It is marked as **Exhibit 3** to support Plaintiff's argument regarding the collaboration between Build Our Center, Inc., and the Washoe County Library System.

Relevant Information: 5/21/23 RN&R article “The Washoe County libraries and Our Center, a spokeswoman said, will be producing “rainbow festivals””, 7/25/24 Our Town Reno “Washoe County Libraries cease hosting Pride events”... “there has been work by library staff and volunteers to make changes”, 7/24/24 KUNR “Our Center, a Reno nonprofit that advocates for LGBTQ+ residents, hosted the events in partnership with the library and paid for the drag performers”, 9/6/24 RN&R “Washoe County Library System values our partnership with Our Center”.

CERTIFICATION

I, Drew J. Ribar, certify that this exhibit is a true and accurate representation of the document referenced.

Respectfully submitted,

/S/Drew J. Ribar

Drew J. Ribar

Pro Se Plaintiff

NEWS

Drag queen story time returns to Washoe libraries this summer



by Frank X. Mullen
May 21, 2023



PHOTO/Courtesy Ginger Devine: Miss Ginger Devine, aka Christopher Daniels, is the reader at Drag Queen Story Time events scheduled at Washoe County libraries.

Drag Story Hour, a program popular at libraries across the country, is back at Washoe County libraries this summer.

The events are scheduled on:

- Thursday, June 15, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Downtown Reno Library
- Saturday, June 17, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the North Valleys Library
- Saturday, July 15, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Sparks Library.

The reader at all three will be Miss Ginger Devine, who was voted Best Drag Queen in the 2015 *Reno News & Review* readers' poll.

At story time, men dressed in exaggerated, stereotypical feminine clothes and makeup read children’s books to children and their parents. The program has been a hit in Washoe County, but it’s also a lightning rod in the culture wars. In late February, opponents of the event, spurred on by Washoe County Republican Party leaders, attended a Washoe County Commission meeting to demand the story times be discontinued.

Opponents argue that such events are inappropriate for children. Advocates of the story times note that parents decide what is and is not appropriate for their own children. Parents accompany their kids to the events.

The stories read are chosen from a library-approved list. The event is paid for by the nonprofit Friends of the Washoe County Library, and no tax money is involved.

Our Center, which provides Northern Nevada’s LGBTQ+ community with access to advocacy, support, educational programs, services and resources, will be coordinating volunteers to attend each of the events. The Washoe County libraries and Our Center, a spokeswoman said, will be producing “rainbow festivals” at each of the readings “to further support the joyful work that drag performers contribute to youth.”

Volunteers will receive conflict intervention and de-escalation training before their involvement at each of the readings in order to help keep the events safe.

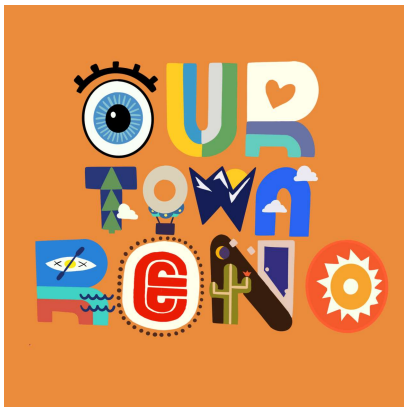
Our Center welcomes more volunteers; more information can be found at ourcenterreno.org.



Helen Barrett

May 22, 2023 at 9:11 am

Hooray, keep up the good work.



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07.25.24

Drag Queen Story Hour Off the Books at Washoe County Libraries

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See you later (and somewhere else) kids! A file photo by Kia Rastar from the downtown library where drag queen story was recently held earlier this summer.

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such as “Stop Sexualizing Our Children” and other intimidation tactics.

In an email sent out on Tuesday, Manager Brown indicated that “on July 11th the Workplace Violence Committee (WVC) unanimously voted to recommend that Washoe County libraries cease hosting Pride events due to employee safety concerns. Although there has been work by library staff and volunteers to make changes to the event plans over the past few years, including increasing the presence of security officers and de-escalation training for library employees, despite these efforts, the WVC believes the risk to County employees has

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A June 15th edition at North Valleys allegedly included a librarian being injured by a protester trying to force himself inside the library where only adults accompanied by attendant kids were allowed. Some protesters started going inside with kids, and then held up signs to disrupt the story time itself.

The library system says it will continue working with Our Center and other LGBTQ+ groups despite this setback.

Our Town Reno reporting, July 2024

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Washoe County library cancels Drag Story Hour

KUNR Public Radio | By [Bert Johnson](#)

Published July 24, 2024 at 5:42 PM PDT

Updated July 26, 2024 at 10:57 AM PDT



LISTEN • 1:42



Bert Johnson / KUNR Public Radio

Drag performer Miss Ginger Devine reads to a crowd of around 40 kids and parents at the Downtown Reno library on June 20, 2024.

Editor's note: This story was updated to include reactions to the cancellation of Drag Queen Story Hour.

Update, July 26, 2024, at 9:13 a.m. PT

The ACLU of Nevada announced its team was looking into the matter and would consider "every option available" to protect LGBTQ+ rights.

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And Reno-based Our Center, a nonprofit that advocates for LGBTQ+ community members, called on county staff to reverse their decision.

"We call upon County officials to reconsider their stance and take proactive measures to protect all community events from harassment and intimidation."

But Republican activists, who had been pushing for such an outcome, had a muted response.

"I would categorize it as a wise decision," said Bruce Parks, chair of the Washoe County GOP.

But Christopher Daniels was perhaps affected most of all. Daniels, who uses they/them pronouns, has been reading picture books to kids for the last six years as Miss Ginger Devine.

Daniels had been expecting the events to get canceled. But that didn't make it any easier to take.

"When I heard the news, I was gutted," they said.

Daniels added that losing the partnership that brought Drag Story Hour to libraries sends a message that LGBTQ+ people don't belong in public spaces – and takes a valuable resource away from children who may be struggling with their own identities.

"To have a drag queen share messages of love and acceptance at a point in my life where I didn't love myself and didn't accept myself ... would have done so much for me in my own journey of self-acceptance," they said.

Now that Drag Story Hour has been forced out of libraries, Parks doesn't plan to protest the events anymore. He insisted that his only problem with the event was its use of public resources.

In reality, Our Center picked up the tab.

Still, Parks and other local conservatives insisted the events be held in private venues – which is exactly what Daniels said they plan to do.

"If we can move forward, we're gonna move forward," they said. "And we're gonna do even more."

Organizers of the event are now looking for a new place to host a Drag Story Hour originally scheduled for September 8, 2024.

Original story, published July 24, 2024 at 5:42 p.m. PT

A spokesperson for the Washoe County Library System confirmed Wednesday that Drag Story Hour events have been canceled.

The decision comes after a librarian was injured when a self-described First

“Despite ongoing efforts by library staff and volunteers to enhance safety measures, including increased security presence and de-escalation training, the committee concluded that the risks posed to county employees have reached an unacceptable level,” Brown wrote.

Brown cited [ongoing protests](#) against the events led by members of the Washoe County GOP as a concern.

Almost two years ago, far-right activist groups like Moms for Liberty pivoted from attacking public schools over mask mandates to targeting libraries. At around the same time, Washoe County Republicans started disrupting local library board meetings and Drag Story Hour events.

The decision came as a blow, according to Stacey Spain of Our Center.

“We are desperately disappointed,” she said.

Our Center, a Reno nonprofit that advocates for LGBTQ+ residents, hosted the events in partnership with the library and paid for the drag performers.

Spain said that while they could find another venue for the events, it’s still a loss to the community.

“Separate is not equal,” she said. “The fact that we could produce Drag Story Hour at a venue that is not the library does not mean that it will have the same effect as having the program in the library, with other programs that celebrate other kinds of diversity.”

The next Drag Story Hour was scheduled as part of Northern Nevada Pride on Sept. 8, at the South Valleys Library.

But while the event series is canceled for now, the library system says it remains committed to working with Our Center and other LGBTQ+ groups.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric P. B.", located at the bottom of the document page.

[Download this PDF](#)

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This PDF from the Washoe County Office of the County Manager can also be viewed and downloaded on Scribd.

Tags[Local Stories](#)[LGBTQ](#)[Washoe Library](#)[northern nevada pride](#)**Bert Johnson**

Bert is KUNR's senior correspondent. He covers stories that resonate across Nevada and the region, with a focus on environment, political extremism and Indigenous communities.

[See stories by Bert Johnson](#)

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A low-angle photograph of the Nevada State Legislature building. The words "NEVADA STATE LEGISLATURE" are mounted in large, dark blue, three-dimensional letters on the light-colored stone facade. A white classical column is visible on the right, and a rectangular light fixture is mounted on the wall below the letters. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

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Al Aire con KUNR - 20 de diciembre de 2024



USDA to test nation's milk for bird flu as virus spreads across Mountain West states



Local Stories

Families attend downtown library drag story hour in spite of GOP protest

Bert Johnson, June 21, 2024

Republican activists have targeted drag story hour events for years. But that hasn't stopped young children and their parents from enjoying the show.

[LISTEN](#) • 2:22

**Local Stories****Library Board chair works against library from the inside**

Bert Johnson, June 25, 2024

In November, voters will decide whether to renew funding for public libraries. But a small group of Republican activists wants to defund them – and one of their own leads the library board.

[LISTEN](#) • 4:42



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Library Board votes to keep LGBTQ+ books in place

Bert Johnson, April 18, 2024

Trustees upheld library staff recommendations to reject book challenges filed by far-right residents.

[LISTEN](#) • 1:00



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NEWS

Sashaying away: After Washoe County officials banned Drag Queen Story Hour at libraries, Our Center announced the event will continue at three new venues



by Carly Sauvageau
September 2, 2024



Drew Ribar speaks at the Aug. 21 Washoe County Library Board of Trustees meeting, during which his one-year suspension, for allegedly injuring a librarian at a June 2024 Drag Queen Story Hour event, was upheld. Photo/Carly Sauvageau

The Washoe County Library Board of Trustees on Aug. 21 voted to overturn the suspensions of two of the three people initially banned from the library system following a Rainbow Fest and Drag Queen Story Hour event on June 15.

The trustees determined Sandee Tibbett and Fred Myer could again go to Washoe County libraries as of midnight that night. Drew Ribar—who ran an unsuccessful campaign against P.K. O’Neill (R-Carson City) this year for the Nevada Assembly District 40 seat—remains suspended until June 15, 2025.

Ribar’s suspension will end one year after his actions at the Rainbow Fest and Drag Queen Story Hour—a reading program that originated in San Francisco in which a drag artist reads age-appropriate books to children—at the North Valleys Library on June 15 resulted in a librarian reportedly getting injured. After the event, Washoe County cancelled all future Drag Queen Story Hours in the library system. This is all part of an ongoing culture war that has been playing out not only in the Washoe County Library System, but regionally and nationally for the past several years.



During the Aug. 21 Washoe County Library Board of Trustees meeting, trustees voted to lift the suspensions of two Drag Queen Story Hour protesters, Sandee Tibbett and Fred Myer. Photo/Carly Sauvageau

According to library staff and others present during the Rainbow Fest and Drag Queen Story Hour on June 15, library staff monitored who was coming in and out of the event. Every child needed to have an adult with them to enter.

Ribar did not bring a child and was not let into the Drag Queen Story Hour. However, as people entered the room, Ribar placed his foot in the space between the door and the doorway, keeping the door open.

“My foot was definitely in there,” he said during the Aug. 21 meeting of trustees, adding that he placed his foot there so he could get into the library. Library staff attempted to keep him out, and the altercation led to the reported arm injury of the librarian.

As a result, Washoe County’s Workplace Violence Committee unanimously voted to discontinue Drag Queen Story Hour over staff-safety concerns, according to [a letter](#) to library staff from Washoe County Manager Eric Brown.

“Despite ongoing efforts by library staff and volunteers to enhance safety measures, including increased security presence and de-escalation training, the committee concluded that the risks posed to county employees have reached an unacceptable level,” Brown wrote.

Brown was not made available to the *RN&R* for an interview.

Viewpoints from the library

Washoe County Library System spokesperson Brad Bynum told the *RN&R* that the decision did not come from library staff or the library board, but the county alone.

“(Library director) Jeff Scott didn’t make that decision,” Bynum said. “Stacy McKenzie, our assistant director, did not make that decision. None of the branch managers made that decision. We really value these events; the Washoe County Library System values our partnership with Our Center. We value our LGBT+ patrons ... and want to continue to serve that part of our community.”

Bynum said that while he can’t speak for everyone on staff, because there’s a diversity of views throughout the library system, the staff members with whom he has spoken about the cancellation “all expressed a high degree of disappointment.”

“There’s a lot of LGBT staff, and this feels personal to them,” Bynum said. “And it feels like a capitulation to bullies. And it’s a small group of five or six patrons. Most of them don’t even have library cards. They’re just people who show up to disrupt these events.”

Ribar said at the Aug. 21 trustee meeting that he does not utilize library services but visits libraries to “record government.” Bynum said this is common among the people who protest Drag Queen Story Hour, and most of them do not have library cards.

Tibbett and Myer are among the people who have regularly protested Drag Queen Story Hour. During the June 15 Rainbow Fest, Tibbett brought a child with her and received a bracelet to be let into the event. According to a video obtained by the *Reno News & Review*, Tibbett held up a sign during the story hour, but it was unclear what it said. In the same video, library staff asked Tibbett where her child was, and she told them it was “none of their business.”

McKenzie told the library trustees at the Aug. 21 meeting that what Tibbett had held up was “insulting and child-inappropriate signage, including the logo of a known LGBTQ hate group.”

North Valleys Library Manager Jonnica Bowen said at the Aug. 21 meeting that Myer had harassed library staff and called Bowen a pervert. Myer denied this happened.

Suspensions overturned

The library board voted on Aug. 21 to overturn Tibbett and Myer’s suspensions. Tibbett was granted the appeal because the board said a one-year suspension was too harsh for what she had done. Myer was granted an appeal after his wife, Victoria Myer, showed the board a video of Fred Myer staying outside the boundaries of the event and not exhibiting confrontational behavior.

Bowen said the video showed just one part of an entire day.

“This board is very conflicted because we want to show the utmost respect to the jobs undertaken by our library staff,” Library Board Chair Ann Silver said before the vote. “But I would entertain either to forgo ... or reduce the suspension.”

Victoria Myer thanked the board for watching her video but said there was still a lot of work to do to change the library system. This was echoed by Fred Myer, Ribar and others in the audience who said the librarians were liars.

Victoria Myer also said the librarians locked an 11-year-old girl and a 10-year-old girl in the library during one of these events. McKenzie said the librarians didn't let the girls out because children could not attend the event without an adult—and could not leave without the adult with whom they came.

“We keep hearing that we’ve done something unlawful, and yet no police officers have contacted us. There is nothing going on,” McKenzie said.

Others during the public comment period after the meeting criticized the library board for its decision to overturn the two suspensions.

“Shame on this library board for their lack of support for our librarians. They deserve better than what you gave them tonight,” citizen Cate Salim said.

Tara de Queiroz commented: “I assumed that the library board would look at this matter and come in from the point of view of supporting library staff. Library staff were put in the position of defending a library event from people who were there to spread anti-LGBTQ hate and slander. Instead, the library board seems to take the view that there are two equal sides to this issue. This is not an issue with two equal sides.”

Stacey Spain, the executive director of Our Center, a nonprofit that supports Reno's LGBTQ+ community, told the *RN&R* the county was treating the two sides of the issue with false equivalency.



Stacey Spain, the executive director of Our Center, said that Washoe County was treating the two sides of the Drag Queen Story Hour protests with false equivalency. “No one asks the NAACP to sit down at the table with the Ku Klux Klan,” she said. Photo/David Robert

“What I would say is no one asks the NAACP to sit down at the table with the Ku Klux Klan,” Spain said. “That is an exaggerated kind of comparison, but it could shake some folks up to think about the fact that LGBTQ individuals and families for two years had to sit in a room with folks who denied their humanity, who said they should not exist, who called them pedophiles.”

Ribar told KOLO 8 that he does not have a problem with the LGBTQ community.

“They’re free to have whatever sexuality they want to have; that’s up to them. It’s a free country,” Ribar said in the interview. “The issue I have is when you bring children into it.”

Similar sentiments are often expressed by those who have protested Drag Queen Story Hour and books in the Washoe County Library System they say are inappropriate for children. The counter-arguments to these protests are typically that people do not have to attend Drag Queen Story Hour and should monitor their children’s media consumption if they don’t feel it is appropriate, rather than banning books from the entire library system.

Jon Lewis, a research fellow at the Program on Extremism at George Washington University, said protests toward LGBTQ+ programming and content have been increasing, and the protests in Washoe County are part of a greater movement happening nationally.

“I think this unfortunately fits pretty neatly in the broader context of anti-drag mobilization efforts which have targeted LGBTQ people in the U.S. over the last couple years,” Lewis said in an interview with the *RN&R*. “When we look at data from research organizations and nonprofits to study this, we see a very concerning rise in this type of local level, unaffiliated political violence and threats to public officials.”

Just a couple of examples: In Lake Luzerne, N.Y., a library was forced to close after simply announcing a drag queen story hour last year. Last October, protesters in San Fernando, Calif., physically blocked the door of a drag queen story hour event so people could not go inside.

Though some residents criticized the county for giving in to the protestors, Lewis said the jurisdiction is being met with a challenge that goes well beyond Washoe County, and there is no real handbook on how to deal with the moment in which we find ourselves.

“I think what’s tricky is there aren’t really many other tools in the toolbox that we can point to as good off-ramps, right?” Lewis said. “That’s the tricky balancing act. What is the other side of that coin? Because we have a very strong and unique set of protections when it comes to speech and assembly.”

The future of Drag Queen Story Hour

Though Washoe County libraries are no longer hosting Drag Queen Story Hour, the events will continue at non-government venues in Reno including Reno Little Theater, Brūka Theatre and the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northern Nevada, an inclusive faith group.

“Very rarely do we get to create spaces of queer joy,” said Nathan Bakken, the director of congregational life for the UUFNN.

Bakken said the church wants to host Drag Queen Story Hour because of the mistrust LGBTQ+ people may feel toward faith communities.

“We’re excited for this opportunity,” they said.

Christopher Daniels, who uses they/them pronouns and performs as Ginger Devine for Drag Queen Story Hour, said they had been anticipating that Drag Queen Story Hour could be canceled for the last six years, as that’s the amount of time people have been protesting at school and library board meetings.

Still, when the event was canceled, Daniels said they felt gutted.

“What message has the county sent? Anytime that there’s an important event that (people) don’t like, do they just need to show up and use violence, and then the county is going to go, ‘Oh, well, this is unsafe’?” Daniels said.

Daniels said it is typical for the LGBTQ community to rise to the occasion and stand up for themselves. They said the community has shown that through the support and organizing that allowed Drag Queen Story Hour to persevere and expand.

The library system held Drag Queen Story Hour three to four times a year before the cancellation, Bynum said. Now, the events being held at venues other than the libraries are slated to occur nearly once a month, according to a schedule provided by Spain.

“We’re going to do it everywhere,” Daniels said. “So, if you’re tired of hearing about Drag Queen Story Hour, I’m so sorry, honey, because you’re about to hear a whole lot more about me.”

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